

News from Senator Dawn Buckingham Senate District 24

You have spoken, I've heard you and delivered on my campaign promise and now the 85th legislature has also delivered: any sanctuary policy in Texas preventing law enforcement from doing its job, or from cooperating or honoring federal detainer requests from Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials, is now prohibited by Texas law. Senate Bill 4 has been passed by members of both the Senate and the House and signed into law by the Governor.

During my campaign, and throughout this legislative session, constituents in Senate District 24 repeatedly told me border security is their number one issue. They also ask how can a law enforcement official pick and choose which laws to follow and which to ignore without being removed from office. I agree with your concerns and share them myself since my home county sheriff has insisted she would only comply with federal detainer requests on a very limited basis.

That's why I pledged to fight for a safe Travis County and for a safe Texas and co-authored Senate Bill 4. This legislation simply says any public official, including a sheriff, who refuses to honor a federal immigration detainer requests may be removed from public office.

Despite fear tactics used by opponents, such as the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas which has issued a nationwide "travel alert" against coming to Texas, any law abiding person has nothing to be afraid of. SB 4 does not change what was already law - it just clarifies that it must be followed by everyone. Our nation must return to the rule of law, not the rule of man.

For city and county officials who worry about the budgetary impacts of possibly holding criminal violators longer, I have heard you as well. As a staunch opponent of unfunded mandates, in addition to co-authoring Senate Bill 4, I filed Senate Bill 986 to support Texas municipalities and counties who incur costs related to enforcing immigration laws and complying with, honoring, or fulfilling any immigration detainer. Senate Bill 986, which is complimentary legislation to Senate Bill 4, was added to Senate Bill 4 in the Texas House and is included in the final version of the final bill. The language in Senate Bill 986 that is now part of state law creates the "Enforcement of Immigration Law Grant Program" and directs the criminal justice division within the Governor's office to establish and administer a competitive grant program to provide assistance to local entities.

Senator Dawn Buckingham, MD